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DIT:Students Union

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March 2010

DIT News

Your independent student newspaper

News

DIT at the centre of an expenses inquiry
Plus: The Student Union election result; an update on Grangegorman; we examine the topical issue of grade inflation; plus an update on proposed budget cuts.

Dent

The Fashion issue!
Trends to put a
spring in your step
AND we speak to the
lovely Imelda May

Sport

The latest
from the
world of
DIT Sport



College services facing even more cuts

A further budget cut of 8 to 9 per cent is expected next year, in addition of the 8 per cent cut imposed this year.

The impact of the original cut was mitigated by the elevation of the student capitation fee from €900 to €1500.

The extra €600 was routed back to the college to make up, in part, for the loss in budget.

Full story page 5 >>

Up-to-date DIT data missing from grade inflation report

Of all the Institutes of Technology in the state, only DIT does not have up-to-date grade data included in the preliminary report on the quality of graduates and grade inflation which was published by the Department of Education and Science (DoES) on March 12th.

Full story page 4 >>

Grangegorman inches closer to sign off

Sign-off on Grangegorman moves ever closer with the decision expected from Cabinet on April 23rd, 2010.



Grangegorman was first mooted as the site for a consolidated DIT campus in 1998, however by the time the oversight body, the Grangegorman Development Agency, was set up and had started the planning, the economy has started to falter and the project became a candidate for cancellation as part of the Government cutbacks.

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Students still waiting for exam results

First-year journalism with a language students have been waiting since February 22nd for the promised exam results.



The Aungier Street exam office timetable said that the results would be available from February 22nd, but results have yet to materialise.

A spokesperson for the department said that all the exam results had been processed and that the department would look into the access issue with some urgency.

"The uncertainty has definitely affected us this term," said one student. "I don't know how I've done and how to plan for the summer - I don't know if I'll have to repeat."

"I'd also really like to get the feedback via the results on how I'm doing," he added.

DIT in travel expenses scandal

Cliona Ward, Editor

DIT came under harsh public criticism after the college admitted that staff breached strict travel procedures by buying first-class plane tickets for travel on institute business.

In 2007 staff in the science faculty breached procedure and bought four first-class plane tickets despite the fact that the purchase of first-class flights is prohibited under college rules.

During the same academic year DIT spent just under €1,000,000 on foreign flights.

Apart from the first-class flights, 137 business class and 4,832 economy flights were also purchased for staff during the 2007/08 academic year - an average of over six tickets a day.

Of those flights, 926 of those were for non-staff members at a cost to the college of just over €122,000, though some of this money has been refunded.

In a statement, DIT said the first-class flights were booked for its staff by officials at a Chinese academic institute.

The flights were taken by two members of the Faculty of Science, who travelled from Beijing to the Chinese city of Harbin, where DIT has a joint degree programme in computing with Harbin Institute of Technology.

"A number of DIT staff travel to Harbin each year, and colleagues from Harbin also visit Dublin to ensure that the programme runs smoothly" the statement said.

DIT also assert that the purchase of the first-class tickets were made by staff at the Harbin Institute of Technology and that the difference in the cost between economy and first-class was covered by Harbin.

"The original flight on which they expected to travel was cancelled and this alternative was booked at short notice. The cost of the two round-trip flights was €566, including taxes," the statement said.

The college maintain that no other first-class flights have been accounted for by DIT since 2007.



Sean Campbell takes the plunge for DITSU Rag Week, *Graham Ó Maonaigh*

"It is not permitted under our policies and procedures concerning travel and subsistence."

A college spokesperson explained that the flight bill of over €900,000 is not unusual. "The reality is that all higher-education institutions and any organisation in a knowledge-based industry would engage in quite a lot of international travel," she said.

"In our case, staff members travel to conferences, present papers, arrange student ex-

changes, recruit students and so on. We also receive academics from other institutions around the world, so it's a two-way street."

The details emerged in a report carried out by the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) investigating foreign travel in state organizations.

However, only limited details of the survey were published and organisations whose staff took first-class flights or who paid for spouse travel were not identified by name.

Nevin wins Presidency by margin of 17 votes

Editor

The student Union elections of 2010 came to an exciting end when Ciarán Nevin was elected Student Union President after beating Sean Campbell by a mere 17 votes.

The final tally of presidential votes put Ciarán ahead with 1699 votes, over Sean's 1682.

There were only 18 votes cast in the DIT Temple Bar campus meaning that the final result was effectively chosen by a small campus, the DIT photography school.

The count was held in Bolton St on February 25th, and owing to the closeness of the Presidential race a recount was held the following day, which confirmed the close

result.

In the race for Vice President of Services and Trading Eric Fitzgerald emerged victorious.

Barry Drake failed to reach quota, while John Wade was beaten by sixty eight votes.

The only woman in the running for a sabbatical position emerged victorious when Clare Cullen beat John May for the role of Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

All elected sabbatical officers will begin their roles this coming July.

A word from the Editor...

Spring has arrived and that means your March issue of DIT News is here!



In this issue we talk to the Student Union President elect Ciaran Nevin, we give some details on the Grangegorman situation and examine the topical issue of grade inflation!

In sports the Six Nations is lamented and Cheltenham revered, along with an interview with Irish poker Champ Rory Rees Brennan and news from the world of DIT Sports!

We hope you're finally enjoying the sunshine and that this latest issue adds a little light to your day.

All the best,

Cliona Ward

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It is the policy of DIT News to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. Any corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper.

It is also the policy of DIT News to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by any comment or opinion contained within.

Please forward any such comments to the Editor.

That time of the month!

It was a good month for:

Sandra Bullock: Best actress for The Blind Side

Taxpayer morale: Sean Fitzpatrick brought in for questioning

The Irish abroad: world goes green for St Patrick's Day

Scotland: outplaying the Irish at their own game in Croke Park

Dublin: gets yet another mayor, this one to bind all the others

Obama: Health Care Bill gets all clear from Congress

And a bad month for:

Sandra Bullock: blind-sided by hubby's affair

Cardinal Sean Brady: the sins of the fathers

Tallaght Hospital: under the microscope for not handling referrals

Government: Sargent and O'Dea get marching orders

College graduates: final degree grades and abilities questioned by business leaders

Workers: new retirement age of 68

Dublin City University

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath



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Postgraduate Open Evening

6pm-7.30pm, Monday 22nd March 2010

At DCU Business School, Dublin City University, Dublin 9

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BUS ROUTES TO DCU

Bus routes to DCU: 3, 4, 4A, 11, 11A, 11B, 13, 13A, 16, 16A, 17A, 19A, 33, 41, 41B, 41C, 46X, 104, 748.

Refreshments will be available from 6pm with a wine reception at 7.20pm.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit www.dcu.ie/dcubs or contact the School Office at tel: 01 700 5265

FREE PARKING VOUCHERS will be available for our multi-storey car park, accessible via the Collins Avenue entrance.

Register at: www.dcu.ie/dcubs

Google explain position on Irish grade inflation

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

John Herlihy, general manager of Google Ireland and vice president of global advertising operations, addressed the controversial issue of Irish grade inflation, and of educational standards.

Speaking to reporters, Mr Herlihy criticised the lack of accountability and monitoring within the Irish education sector.

"If you look at it, the college student doesn't hold the university accountable for the quality of their education...nobody is holding the universities accountable for the quality of the teaching and the quality of the degree.

"Currently with universities, the funding is based on inputs. It would appear that to get into a lot of our master's programmes you need a second-class honours grade one degree (2:1) and miraculously the number of 2:1s has gone way up.

That's another funding mechanism...Let's go output-driven rather than input-driven and ...you should be able to measure the teachers. In no other business in the world can you not measure the deliverer of the service."

Google as a company are renowned for their stringent recruitment, and are notoriously choosy when hiring.

Currently there are 106 open positions in Dublin advertised on their recruitment home page.

According to Netscape founder, Marc Anderssen, speaking in 2007, Google relies heavily on educational qualifications, where the general impression is that non-PhD's need not apply.

This contrasts strongly with Microsoft, for example, which relies more on the use of aptitude tests in their recruitment policy.

This involves the candidate carrying out logic puzzles, and allegedly a classic interview question was in a Microsoft job interview is "why is a manhole cover round"

Anderssen explains "for the background part, I like to see what someone has done. Not been involved in, or been part of, or watched happen, or was hanging around when it happened. I look for something you've done, either in a job or (often better yet) outside of a job.

The business you started and ran in high school. The nonprofit you started and ran in college.

If you're a programmer: the open source project to which you've made major contributions. Something."

Here's what I think those criteria are - Drive, Curiosity and Ethics."



Guitar Soc busking on Grafton Street for Rag Week
(L-R) Robert Rice, Ciaran O'Rourke, John Jereza and Mick Monaghan.

RAG week raises over 9K for Crumlin kids

The total money raised currently stands at around €9,000, but donations are still coming in from the participants.

The postponement of the SCAD event hit the fundraising badly, but it is planned to re-schedule in April.

The overall target for fundraising for the year is €22k.

Minister O'Keefe signs off on first phase of Grange-gorman

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

>> continued from page 1

In February 28th this year, Minister Batt O'Keefe indicated his intention to sign-off on the first phase of the project. This final decision is expected on April 23rd, 2010.

Student Levy proposed to fund new student centre

Detailed planning of the student services at Grangegorman has revealed that the planned student centre will run at an estimated deficit of €200k each year.



An aerial view of the Grangegorman site.

The options for meeting this shortfall are to either cut back further on the Student Union, Societies and Clubs budgets or to introduce a student levy of around €30 each year, on top of the capitation fee.

Many other Irish third level institutions have a similar fee for projects like dedicated student centres.

Trinity College Dublin has a levy of approximately €90 for their planned new student centre, their USI contribution and the college newspaper. University College Cork have a levy set at a hefty €150 for their existing student centre, their theatre and their USI contribution.

The decision will be made via a student referendum, probably next year. At that point, the implementation details of when and how will also be ironed out.

Learning Spaces

Work has already started on what the learning spaces should look like - the labs, the lecture halls, the classrooms and the equipment.

Students will shortly be asked by DITSU to express their preferences and opinions, and the final design should be complete by the end of July.

DIT launch awards for involved students

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

The Governing Body of the Dublin Institute of Technology has established a number of awards to recognise students who have contributed greatly to student life in the Institute and their local communities.

"By recognising those students who have made a difference in DIT, and have left a positive legacy, we hope to inspire other students to make a similar contribution" said DITSU Vice President Tracey Flintner, speaking for the group.

They are now seeking nominations for these awards. Nominations may be made by staff, students, or committees of DIT.

An Awards ceremony celebrating the winners and their achievements will take place in late April.

DITSU ask that you please keep an eye on your DIT email account for more information.

DIT yet to be investigated by grade inflation report

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

A report carried out by the Department of Education into grade inflation has found that the rate of first-class honours degrees awarded by most Irish universities has increased by more than 100 per cent since 1994.

The inquiry was ordered by Minister for Education Batt O'Keeffe after US multinationals – including Google and Intel – raised concerns about declining standards.

Minister O'Keeffe indicated that some US multinationals were reluctant to accept graduates from some colleges because of a perceived lack of quality due to the inflated grades.

Standards at DIT have not yet been examined by the grade inflation study, while inflated grades have been seen in many other third level institutes across the country.

The study shows an increase of more than 700 per cent in the number of firsts awarded by NUI Maynooth over this period.

Substantial increases were also evident at University College Cork whose grades were up 174 per cent; Trinity College Dublin, up 126 per cent; NUI Galway up 115 per cent; and University of Limerick which was up 107 per cent.

The report details a 100 per cent increase in first-class honours for universities and 52 per cent for Institutes of Technology (IoTs), excluding DIT, since 1994.

The percentage of university graduates getting first-class honours degrees (level 8 programmes) increased from 8.3 per cent in 1997 to 16.2 per cent in 2008.

In the IoT sector, Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) graduates getting first-class honours at level 8 increased from 11.2 per cent in 1998 to 16.6 per cent in 2008.

However, the rates have stabilised in the last five years to between 13 and 16%, the biggest growth having occurred in the 10 years between 1994 and 2004.

Reports into the same issue, compiled by the Network of Irish Education Standards (NIES), and referenced in the DoES report, also exclude DIT.

Simon Quinn, co-founder of NIES and a lecturer in IT Tralee, said that the state body responsible for compiling the data for all the universities and Institutes of Technology (IoTs), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), said they did not have the DIT data in a usable format.

"The IoTs provided the data for the original study up to but refused to co-operate when we requested more recent data," said Mr Quinn. "We did eventually obtain it after a long process and appeals through the Freedom of Information (FOI) process".

Several colleges, when contacted by NIES, questioned the robustness and rigour of the analysis being conducted on the data, especially in the light of negative pronouncements made by NIES in the media. One college, Blanchardstown IT, also openly admitted not having the resources to compile the results for NIES.

In their report into IoT grade inflation for 1994 to 2004, NIES said that DIT was a special case due to "its unique history and large size, it would not be wise to aggregate its figures with those of the other Institutes. It was deemed to merit an entirely separate analysis".

A spokesperson for the DoES confirmed that the department also considered DIT a special case but did not explain why up-to-date data was not available.

"Prioritizing growth over academic standards"

NIES said that their research has shown that the main cause for grade inflation is that educational institutions have prioritized growth over academic standards:

"Indeed, one of the most startling findings is that, in this era of ever higher awards at completion, the CAO points required for entrance to the IOT sector have been in steep decline. Thus, weaker and weaker students have been entering the sector, only to receive ever improving grades."

"Moreover, the procedures for examining students and arriving at grades in third level educational institutions have proven to be remarkably susceptible to pressure to degrade standards," added Mr Quinn.

In the DoES report, several explanations are proposed for the trend.

Better teaching methods, more flexible assessment methods, more highly motivated learners and, in the last 10 years, a better use of the full 100% range for marking, rather than the narrow 30%-75% range in use before, are listed as potential positive causes.

Balanced against these are the negative forces of increased competition for learners here and abroad, relaxing standards and invalid or



Minister O'Keeffe commissioned the report after US multinationals became reluctant to hire Irish graduates stating that there was a lack of quality owing to inflated grades

unreliable assessment procedures.

The report said that grade inflation was an international phenomenon and that data from Britain showed that the proportion of students receiving first-class honours there increased from 8.4 per cent in 1999 to 13.3 per cent in 2008.

However, the figures do show that Irish universities and colleges are awarding more first-class honours than those in Britain.

"There is an absence of objective measures against which the quality of Irish graduates can be benchmarked against international peers" says the report.

The World Economic forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Report ranked the quality of Ireland's secondary and tertiary education system, as assessed by the business community, as 8th out of 133 economies.

The report concluded that a deeper and more pervasive implementation of assessment by learning outcomes and the amalgamation of the multiple internal quality assurance and quality assessment agencies into a single body, also empowered to examine the standards applied across all institutions would provide the transparency and oversight needed.

A bill is currently being drafted for the latter.

"Until now, the universities and the ITs have

been self-regulating. It is important that this body be independent and have international experts and industry representatives on it," said a spokesman for the education minister.

The more fundamental issue about the relative quality of graduates in terms of meeting the needs of enterprise and wider society will be part of the development of the National Strategy for Higher Education by the Higher Education Strategy (HES) group, said the report.

The HES investigation into the quality of graduates and overall quality of outputs in higher education is expected over the summer.

In Jun 2009, in DIT, the chief executive of the Higher Education Authority, Tom Boland said that "Ireland is falling behind in quality. ... our graduates are not always the first choice of employers and our famed flexibility and intellectual nimbleness is disappearing".

He said that there was a requirement to transform Irish higher education from "a set of institutions operating in isolation into a coherent, well co-ordinated system of higher education and research, where quality outcomes are the paramount pre-occupation and shrewd use of resources a key factor in success in contributing to national goals".

Teaching standards under fire following inflation report

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

Professor Colum Kenny from DCU exhorted students to rise up, saying that lecturers are not in the clear in this issue and that poor quality lecturers are not being dealt with.

Generally a teaching qualification is not a prerequisite for a lecturing post.

In DIT, teaching qualifications and teaching hours are one of a number of criterion by which the candidate may have garnered the required 3-5 year post-qualification experience.

Other criteria include the candidate's working towards a phd or masters.

Since 1 March 2006, all new academic staff, who do not currently have a teaching qualification or equivalent, are expected to undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Third Level Learning and Teaching offered by the DIT Learning and Teaching Centre within the first two years of their appointment.

This applies to all staff appointed to DIT at Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer grades including pro-rata posts.

Are we being forced overseas?

Andrew Purfield, AST

Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan will surely have been rocked by the latest findings of the European Commission.

Ireland will now almost definitely face unprecedented cuts -- no matter who is in power after 2012.

Minister Lenihan seeks to slash the budget's deficit by eight percentage points by 2014. Also, the Irish Central Bank had previously indicated that a return to growth in 2011 was not beyond possibility.

In fact-in the 2009 report-it specifically forecasted a possible improve in exports as high as three percent with even lower consumption expected as result of falling wages and potentially prolonged VAT rates.

However such an increase in exports it had correctly warned, was 'contingent upon the durability of international recovery' as domestic sources of growth were 'unlikely to emerge in the near term'.

In other words we are a very open economy hugely reliant upon multinational companies in the private sector for our economic growth.

At least seventy five percent of private companies in Ireland are here as a result of Foreign Direct Investment.

They will jump ship for lower wages or even a marginally better tax rate-as was seen with Dell, with SR technics, and so many others.

The European commission has put to bed any Irish hopes of growth for the foreseeable future-in fact it worryingly stated that even with a change of government-full recovery is unlikely until the second half of the decade.

Also if Fianna Fail win the next election and follow the 'drawn out recovery' government debt would only stabilise by 2020.

The European commission has warned the good Minister that emigration is an inevitable hindrance over the next decade to the Irish economy(something Fianna Fail do not necessarily oppose as we all know).

Another worrying factor is set to be high interest rates on government debt, and of course the Bank Guarantee scheme that is NAMA.

It went on to state; 'Specific additional risks relate to the Government's bank Guarantee scheme to support the financial sector, which if called, would lead to increases in(Irish taxpayer) deficit and debt'.

The Government has predicted Irish growth of 3.3 percent next year. However, the European commission has warned against optimistic forecasts on their part-and on Irish agency's parts also.

The E.C. stated it expected about 2.5 percent to be the optimum realistic economic target for the Irish economy.

What all of this means is that Ireland faces potentially at least another seven years of harsh painful budgets.

Perhaps the older wiser heads will remember the eras from 1987-94 which resulted in possibly the slowest economic recovery in the history of the state.

This era also resulted in mass emigration and unemployment as yet another youthful generation was forced to turn it's back on Ireland.

What we face now is something similar. The only fundamental difference really is that students find it possible to obtain qualifications before leaving this time.

Currently unemployment has stabilized. Only the government thinks that this is not because emigration has already started. Up to sixty thousand people emigrated from Ireland last year-with at least two thirds of them Irish born residents dismissing rumours of immigrants returning home.

Many more are expected to leave this year and every year until the economy finally recovers. One in four men are out of work or on the live register-292'000 as opposed to circa 147'000 women.

Almost 90'000 people under the age of twenty five are unemployed-now I wonder how many of them are graduate students who may soon be forced to emigrate? Perhaps the good establishment could answer that one for you folks.



DIT Opinion

Further budget cuts to hit next year

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

A further budget cut of 8 to 9 per cent is expected next year, in addition of the 8 per cent cut imposed this year.

The impact of the original cut was mitigated by the elevation of the student capitation fee from €900 to €1500.

The extra €600 was routed back to the college to make up, in part, for the loss in budget.

In effect, students were making up the government shortfall.

Sources within the college say that a second round of cuts will seriously affect vital services and will be much harder to manage.

DITSU have had their budget cut by 10 per cent, while student numbers and caseload rose 18 per

cent.

The student capitation fee is not expected to rise in September, however, with the imminent prospect of a Cabinet re-shuffle, DITSU expect that the whole fee question will be re-visited after the start of the next academic year.

Questions have been raised in many third level institutions across the country as to what precisely the student capitation fee should be used for.

Certain colleges have chosen to only allocate portions of the fund for library services and maintenance.

A Joint Oireachtas Committee is looking at the issue and DITSU President, Tracey Flinter, will attend a sitting of the committee on Thursday 25th March.

The aim is to ensure consistency and transparency into how the capitation fee is used.

The college has decided to allocate the printing credit left behind by students who leave the college to the Student Assistance Fund.

Last week, they discovered that this amounted to €15k, which is a welcome boost to the fund, which ran out of money last year.

This year, the fund is still in the black and available for students in need.

Mature students call for dedicated SU representation

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

Mature students who attended the annual Mature Student Intervarsity conference hosted by Dundalk IT last month called for dedicated SU representation.

The attendees felt that mature students, and other minority student groups such as part-time students, are severely under-represented in the union and remedial positive action in the form of a dedicated resources was required.

The needs of part-time and mature students also formed part of Ciarán Nevin's winning campaign for the DIT Student Union presidency. "[quote]"

A proposal will be compiled in the next month for submission to the college student unions and USI.

Only three third level institutions attended the conference- DKIT, DIT and NUI Galway.

Another proposal for a mentoring scheme for new students, by students of their own age, will be prepared.

NUI Galway have a similar scheme in operation and have found it to be very effective in student morale and retention.

Boardtalk

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

The second outage of DIT Mail in as many months sparked some discussion on the DIT forum on boards.ie.

Two main causes of frustration - the inconvenience itself and secondly, the utter lack of communication during or after it.

A lively debate on the students union and the presidential election made it to 6 pages.

The Rag Week announcement was greeted with some cheers and a lot of complaints about how it's better elsewhere.

The SU election results were posted in a very measured thread. Posters applauded the use of twitter and live streaming of the election results and the posting to the boards as an example of how communication can be effective.

Tune in to our new

DIT News Blog at

ditnewsblog@wordpress.com

This week, on podcast, we have **Mary Hamey** on being a woman in politics,

top poker tips from the winner of the DIT vs DCU tournament,

Ciarán Nevin (uncut),

DIT Fashion Show preparations, your favourite books and more....

Ciarán Nevin our President Elect!

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

Why did you decide to run?

Well, I've been involved from the very beginning - I've been here 5 years and I've been involved in the SU right from first year - I was elected as class rep and year by year I got more and more involved. I was convenor here in Bolton Street in the second year.

I like the ideal of the SU but I feel there are an awful lot of ways it can be better. I think it's an absolutely necessary thing, I know there are a lot of students who don't think that but that's because they don't see the real benefits of it.

Where the union is letting itself down most is communicating what it's doing in all the different areas. There is an awful lot of work going on but people don't get to see that.

Why not?

It's not that communication is poor, compared to other SU's we're probably the best, but we have particular challenges because we're spread across the city. Also there is a real lack of interaction between the sites at a faculty and academic level which means there isn't a flow of students between the sites.

There is no silver bullet but the most important thing is building up a grass roots thing - you can have all the structure and staff but unless you have people on the ground communicating and talking - "oh, was at such and such, and SU did this", it's not going to be effective.

There are all the technological things to which we are embracing to some extent (facebook etc) but it needs to be a lot stronger. That's something I tried to show through the campaign - myself and the team worked very hard to make sure that we had a dynamic up to date facebook page and youtube videos.

You have to know if you are doing the right stuff - you need to know what students want. It's vital to try new ways and means.

How did you find the election experience?

It was exhilarating! Extremely tiring though - you could only campaign between 9am and 9pm and anytime you weren't campaigning you were planning for the

next day. It was a constant battle but fun and the team enjoyed it.

Did you miss classes?

I did, I skipped quite a few. It's probably not advisable but staff were quite facilitating and I had very good friends in class who would take notes for me and so on.

I felt it was important to make sure I could give myself a good chance of winning rather than miss a certain amount of class and make a mess of everything.

It was a close count at the end?

It was extremely tight, and with the recount on Friday - it was all very tough on everybody I think, on both sides. Numbers kept swaying either way and even as we were watching the votes come out of the boxes from the different sites. For example there were only 18 votes in Temple Bar but these could have made the difference - every vote was vital.

How did you celebrate your win?

It was very difficult to let yourself go on Thursday night, I knew there was a strong possibility of a recount. It's a strange sort of a come down - everything just stops.

You don't know what to do with yourself. So the celebration is more like - every so often I realize "Yes, we did it!" - but you have to get back to the college life, no time to stop. The inauguration in April will be the main thing I think.

The election coverage was inventive this year.....

People were watching the live tv from Australia, from Kosovo - to think that someone's watching live what's happening here for students in Ireland.... and the hype has helped - turnout increased this year by 20%, have to keep building on that, it's still at a very low level.

How is the handover from Tracey going to work?

There's crossover training. There's a couple of weeks break after college and then the training starts - where you basically shadow the current sabbatical and then you start on the 1 July.

Biggest challenges ahead?

Communication is a big one. I was told before I ran that I was stupid to run against an incumbent but what we proved in the election is that if you get a good big team together and working from the very bottom up, you can surmount those challenges,



and it's the same for communications.

Obviously funding and facilities are major issues, in an academic context and also in terms of sports and facilities. When you look at the facilities in Grangegorman which our sports clubs have to play in - it's really bad, appalling.

We expect our sports teams to go and compete at a national level, when you can't compare our facilities to comparable institutions. The library leaks here in Bolton Street etc - the fragmented nature of DIT means the smaller things don't make headlines and get lost completely.

It's the 'broken window' idea isn't it, when the little things are not fixed, people see that and take less care and so on and it gets worse and worse

Things like broken seats etc, when people see that it's hard for them to give a damn. We need to develop a pride in the place but in order to do that DIT needs to show some pride in its students and give them the quality they deserve.

When we think of students, we think of the 10,000 full-time undergrads straight from school but that's only half our population. There are around 10,000 part-time students, and then you have the apprentices, who can't find the employment to finish their course.

That's why you can't just say students are having issues with one particular thing. If the SU can help bring the students together, we can tackle each other's issues together

rather than vying for the best bits.

Would you go into politics full time?

Definitely, would like to, I've always had an interest in it. At the moment I don't think the political system serves the people the best and it's hard to reform from the outside.

If I could achieve one thing in my time it would be to get a more politicized student body in DIT, that would be a major achievement. We have no political clout at all.

Why will you succeed?

If the campaign is any indicator, we've shown we can take on serious challenges when we work as a team. The 9 people at the top of the SU need to work together cohesively. It's the side of the job I like the most - dealing with people and getting them to work together.

It's important the SU isn't just seen as something to put on CVs or jobs for the boys. The students need to see they are getting something for the money they are investing.

Very hypocritical to say DIT are mismanaging their finances if the SU are not offering the best service possible.

I'm looking forward to the year ahead, it will be very challenging. Getting involvement going starts right from induction and in summer an awful lot of work has to be done to prepare for that.

Catch Ciarán's full interview in audio on the new
DIT News Blog at
ditnewsblog@wordpress.com

Issue #5

DENT

Your Dublin ENTertainment magazine

The Fashion Issue



Imelda May on her sexy
Rockabilly sound & style

Fashion we peer through
the looking glass of this
season's hottest trends

Plus reviews, interviews, features and other goodies!!

Hello and welcome to the very first fashion issue of DEnt magazine...

Our newly appointed Fashion team bring you all the latest news from the world of Fashion (see page 3)...

Along with style news we show you how to wear the top trends of this season - the Nude Look (on this page!)

We're spoiling your fashion tastebuds with a fancy new photoshoot inspired by the classic fairytale Alice in Wonderland (see the beautiful photos on page 4...)

But it's not all fashion, we talk the gorgeous Imelda May about her growing star (see page 7...)

And speak to the growing star on the Irish DJ scene DJ Kormac about his new album (look on page 9...)

And offer you an alternative guide to living in Dublin (on page 8...)

There's the usual array of reviews and previews, treats...

For a look at fashion, photography, art, food, music, movies, theatre, culture and more here's DEnt

Ed

Fashion

This month's top trend: THE NUDE LOOK

Now we know what you're thinking – "I can't wear nude" and as a rule we would normally agree that the Irish complexion does not mingle successfully with pale tones but this season has brought such an amazing array of flattering hues that THIS IS THE SEASON to try nude. Our fashion editor Siobhan Lam gives you the low down on the latest fashion trend.



The Romantic Look

Spring's nude shades lend themselves perfectly to a romantic look; think subdued shades of pink and beige combined perfectly with ruffles and lace. Emma Boutique on Clarendon Street has the perfect skirt to start building your romance infused look. This fairy net skirt (right) is from gorgeous label Almost Famous (€185) and is available in beautiful beige; the



subtle soft layers lend themselves effortlessly to that fairy-like lightness that this guise requires. Wear it with pale grey tank and metallic sandals for a casual look.

For something slightly dressier but just as dreamy, look to the ever reliable Spotlight range from Warehouse, where they have a deliciously delicate pale pink layered dress for €97 (left) – ideal for those inevitable summer weddings!



The Simple Look

Let Chloe Sevigny and Kate Bosworth inspire you and start building your outfit with a neutral oversized blazer. Zara always has a great blazer selection, but if you really feel like splashing out - Chloe or Stella McCartney are the labels to focus on. Stick to the longer styles that skim the bum – the looser the style the better, it'll make you look miniscule in comparison. Keep it looking clean with a relaxed white tee and loose khaki shorts, asos.com have a pair of beige bloomer-like shorts for €45 that look identical to the pair that Bosworth rocked.



Alber Elbaz stayed true to his signature look this season, combining his immaculate draping with the new spring trend – nude shades. His Lanvin collection brought a multitude of flattering neutral colours together from light beige to blush pink such as this stunning Grecian dress as seen below. But it wasn't just Lanvin that keep their colour base neutral, everyone from Fendi to Chloe focused their collections on the lighter side of the colour spectrum.

Polish the look off with toned tanned legs and a pair of platform ankle boots – the same website has a wicked pair of ANNABELLE hiker boots (€140) in dusty pink which set off that simplistic look perfectly.



The Eclectic Roker Look

Nude can also work in a harder way for a more eclectic look. For this one, we're channelling the Alice Dellal's of the world – well her smudged black eye liner but we might leave her shaved head for the moment!

Smock tops are a fantastic transitional item between winter and spring, Topshop have a beautiful beige top with gorge beading details for £45. Combine this with some floral jeggings (Topshop have great selection) and the pink ANNABELLE hiker boots already mentioned.

If you're still not convinced, stick to accessories. Nothing works better for slimming and elongating legs than a pair of simple nude high heels...well apart from the gym. Nude heels it is!



DEnt Fashion

The spectacular wardrobe of Grace Kelly will be on display at the V&A in London. Tracing the evolution of her style from her days as one of Hollywood's most popular actresses in the 1950s and as Princess Grace of Monaco, the display will present over 50 of Grace Kelly's outfits together with hats, jewellery and the original Hermès Kelly bag. The display will also include 35 haute couture gowns from the 1960s and 70s by her favourite couturiers Dior, Balenciaga, Givenchy, and Yves St Laurent. From the 17th of April through to 26th of September.

Daisy Stack Rings are the hottest jewellery trend at the moment.

Not dissimilar to the layering necklace look, this trend does exactly what it says on the tin.

Stack to your heart's content!

Daisy rings vary in size, colour and mood – so there really is one for everyone. Celebrity fans include Kesha, Lindsay Lohan and our very own Saturday Una Healy.



Get your **Daisy Stack Ring** from **EMMA** on Clarendon Street. Prices start at €25

March FASHION NOTES

This month's top TRENDS and UPDATES from our fashion editor Siobhan Lam



MISS SELFRIDGE will launch their Gossip Girl inspired collection at the end of April. The collection is based on the four female characters and inspired by the GG costume designer Eric Daman.

So if you fancy yourself a preppy Blair Waldorf or bohemian Serena van der Woodsen, get thyself to Miss Selfridge. XOXO

Campus style



The Vintage Fashion and Decor Fair is set for Sunday the 18th of April.

With prizes for Best Dressed Vintage Style and professional hair and makeup demos – its the perfect opportunity to get dressed up and shop at the same time!

Admission is €4 for Students, in The Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire.

Mark Fast and **Topshop's** collaboration is out at the end of April. Fast's distinctive sherbet flavoured knit dresses are definitely investment pieces and are bound to be included in shape or form this high street collection. Warning: Will fly off the shelves.



Sara Abuzenen, 21

Sara wears: Boots – River Island, Shirt – Topshop & Skirt – Penneys

Define your look: "I have an eclectic look I think."

Who is your favourite style icon and why?

"Nicole Richie – I love how she puts her clothes together, she has a 'mix-match' kind of look – like me! I'm a little disappointed that she has a stylist though."

Favourite Store and Designer? "Topshop is great – it has lots of boho and indie style clothes. And I like Miu Miu."

What 'look' do you hate? "I hate sleeveless bubble jackets and I think that jeans tucked into socks looks terrible."



Laura Carroll, 22

Define your look: "A mixture of girlie and nerd chic! I sometimes wear glasses".

Who is your favourite style icon and why?

"Alexa Chung – she always looks fantastic and edgy. I like Lady Gaga too. She is really really different; she is how all popstars should aspire to look like!"

Favourite Store and Designer? "I love SeSi in Temple Bar and Alexander McQueen – he was amazing."

What 'look' do you hate? "Pyjamas tucked into Ugg boots".



Jess Lowther, 24

Jess wears: Cardigan – Penneys, Top – Paris, Jeans & Uggs – Australia

Define your look: "Girlie, contemporary and fun".

Who is your favourite style icon and why?

"Sienna Miller. She has such effortless style and has really transformed through the years."

Favourite Store and Designer? "FCUK is great. Its high, fast fashion but the clothes really last. And I love the bright colours they use. I love Marc Jacobs – his range has such a bold and distinctive edge."

What 'look' do you hate? "White bras under black tops!"

Curiouser and curiouser...

The cutest trends from Spring/Summer
showcased by our own Alice.

Read the directions and directly you will be
directed in the right fashion direction.

FASHION BY: *Siobhan Lam*
PHOTOGRAPHS BY: *Ray Boileau*
MODEL: *Sharon Moran*
HAIR & MAKE-UP: *Evelyn Lam*



Maxi dress by Emma
Boutique €165,
Pearl Necklace by
Topshop €27
Hairband by Penneys
€1.50



Pink vest by
Topshop €18,
Lace Cardigan by
Topshop €43,
Floral Print shorts
by River Island €33,
Cameo brooch by
Topshop €14

Green ruffle top by
Topshop €49,
Pink ruffle dress by
River Island €53,
Hairband by Awear,
Cameo brooch by
Topshop €14



Cream sailor skirt by
Topshop €53,
Crochet detail
sweater by Topshop
€58,
Hairband by
Penneys €1.50



Floral Lipsy top by
Topshop €49,
Tulle Skirt by Emma
Boutique €185,
Pearl Necklace by
Topshop €27



Pink vest by Topshop
€18,
Lace Cardigan by
Topshop €43, Floral
Print shorts by River
Island €33, Cameo
brooch (as above)





Lace Dress
(worn as top) by
Awear €40,
Polka dot skirt
by Awear €28,
Clock Necklace
by Topshop €30,
Tights by
Penneys €2



Navy lace dress by Awear €60,
Lace slip skirt (worn as apron)
by River Island €30,
Hairband by Penneys €1.50,
Tights by Penneys €2



Floral dress by
Emma Boutique
€130,
Blue Corsage by
Emma Boutique
€65

IMELDA MAY

Dublin's rockabilly darling details the sexy side to her sultry songs

By Niamh Hassell

Sitting patiently in the opulence of The Westbury is not a bad way to spend a Tuesday evening. It gets even better when Imelda May shimmies up the spiral stairs in her kitten heels armed with a bodhran - fresh out of a secret gig - to have a chat about Rockabilly.

May cut her teeth in the basement of Bruxelles club in Dublin singing the blues. Not bad for a girl of 16, who was sometimes barred for being too young to sing her own billings. She learnt quickly, getting as many tips and learning from anyone around her. So, did she always know that she wanted to be a singer?

"I was already doing it before I realised that I wanted to do it - which is kind of backwards.

My family brought me down to Bruxelles and I started to sing down there. It was a great introduction to music, and I learned from a lot of people.

We would go down to JJ Smyths as well, and there was a good underground blues scene. Blues is a great base for learning music, because a lot of music is based around the same kind of rhythms, so it was very good for me to learn all that.

I was already in the clubs singing it before I realised that I wanted to do it. I thought - oooh I could actually do this for a living. It just kind of dawned on me one day after I was gigging."

Imelda attributes her love of Rockabilly to her brother, Fintan Clabby and a theft of a cassette at the age of thirteen.

"It was of Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent, and that was me into it. It couldn't have been a better introduction. They were the three kings of Rockabilly. They were great. That's what got the ball rolling."

It's a ball that has turned into an unstoppable boulder. May is a tour-de-force in the music industry, gathering fans across the world. Her energy and positivity is remarkable,

considering her admission to the fact that she almost never got a record deal to begin with.

"One thing that bugged me for a long time was that all kinds of music seemed to be acceptable in the music scene, and I was doing this and sticking to my guns with it.

I went to various record companies or people within the music business and was told "Keep away from Rockabilly. It's the kiss of death." And I couldn't understand why any type of music should have that title, especially music that was so good, that was such fun and that was such passionate music.

It kind of made me like it even more and made me want to do it even more, because I always liked it before, but that made me really think that's ridiculous, I'm really going for this now."

I have no idea why anyone would say it's the 'kiss of death'. I'd imagine they thought that it was passé. I suppose, like all music, if you do it in a nostalgic way, it can get dated and get very tame.

When I was singing it, I wanted to bring the growling back into it - show that it's not dated and that it is up to date.

The Clash were influenced by Rockabilly. Jeff Beck has talked to me about the its importance on the music scene,

I'm glad that I stuck to my guns. A lot of people are coming out and it's like their dirty secret and they're coming out saying that they love it. Paul Mc Cartney has said it in interviews, Bruce Springsteen went and did his thing with it, Bob Dylan went and brought his album out and they're all saying the same. It's amazing really."

And how amazing it was to see Imelda, this girl from the Liberties, rocking the stage at this year's Grammys with her husband Darryl Higham and the legendary Jeff Beck in a fitting tribute to the memory of guitarist Les Paul.

"To be able to do a tribute to Les Paul was magic for me and of course to be able to do it with Jeff Beck and Darryl as well with me, I was over the moon. It couldn't have been better. But the pressure was on to do well and to do it justice.

I thought I better go for it. I love Les Paul - he was an unbelievable guitarist, he was phenomenal. If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't have music the way it is now

His contribution to music - he started the whole multi-tracking in recording. It was great for the freedom that it gave musicians in what you could do. If it wasn't for Les Paul, from the Beatles all the way up, you wouldn't have the kind of music that you do now

I pre-recorded my backing vocals before the Grammys and sang along to them live, which is exactly what his wife Mary Ford did. We did that to show what they had discovered."

This shan't be the last time we'll see Imelda

and Jeff working together. A recording of Lilac Wine is floating about and fans may be lucky enough to witness them sharing the stage together later this year. Beck won't be the only person collaborating with Imelda in the near future. April will be the month that this Rockabilly queen will get to sing with one of her own personal heroines.

"I have the privilege of singing with Wanda Jackson in the Luminere in London in April.

When she sings, she growls. She sang men's songs in the 50's which was very unusual for the time.

She absolutely ripped through them, playing the guitar and looking fabulous all at the same time, with her pencil skirt and her fringy dresses, her big earrings and her huge black hair and her lipstick. She kind of looked a little bit like Liz Taylor singing

like Elvis.

I was inspired by her, so to be asked to sing with her - I cannot wait! I've always wanted to meet her, so this is even better! Someone played her Love Tattoo and she apparently said that she loved it."

Imelda's eyes light up when she talks about the fashion of Rockabilly. She clearly embodies the rebellious spirit that accompanies the music. This particular evening, she effortlessly manages to pull off a bright red dress with kitten heels and a short leather jacket. Her hair is scooped up into a high ponytail and her trademark blonde curl sweeps underneath her forehead, not one strand out of place.

"I love the Rockabilly style. I love the 50's style. It's very flattering to women and the guys look really cool.

There's something great about all the leather and the denim, the bikes and the cars and the roaring of the engine. There's just something magical about that.

I love the bad girl side rather than the swing skirt and the bobby side. I love the leather jackets and the leopard print and the peep toe mules and the tight jeans. Put a scarf around your neck and you're away!"

It's not just the fashion that Imelda is passionate about. When I ask her what it

is about the music that she loves so much, she drifts off like she is talking about an old lover.

"People think back to the 50's or before that people were innocent then. Of course that's a lot of rubbish.

A lot of the songs when you look deeper into are rebellious. You get all sorts of mad songs.

I love the rebelliousness of it, I personally think it was the punk rock of its day. It was just very exciting and sexy.

I love the madness of the music. I love the fact that you can rip on it, and really enjoy yourself. If you listen to Jean Vincent or the Blue Caps they would be just screaming. They would be recording live and they would just be screaming their heads off in the background, absolutely loving it and flying high."

So what is next for the ebullient Ms May? The next few months are quite important in her calendar as she is touring around the States, supporting Jamie Callum, including a few of her own dates to boot.

Cracking the market in America is always seen as the holy grail of the music business this side of the pond, but something tells me that this lady will be doing her own thing - hopefully breaking a few moulds along the way.

"I think rockabilly was the punk rock of its day. It was just very exciting and sexy"

"I was already doing music before I realised I wanted to do it - which is kind of backwards"



ALTERNATIVE DUBLIN

By Dave Phelan

Swop Shop- Crow St. Baazar, 7 Crow St., Temple Bar.
swopshop.ie

What had been commonly known as 'hand-me-downs' or sneered at as 'second-hand' have become 'vintage' or 'retro'. Both nouns are highly respected buzzwords of the fashionista vocabulary. This and the big 'R' are why clothes trades are enjoying an immense surge of popularity throughout the country. Swop Shop is one such enterprise where one may browse, bargain and trade in the confidence that a new wardrobe awaits at a fraction of the price the likes of Top Shop et al. tend to charge.

Dublin Flea Market- The Co-op, 12 Newmarket Sq., D8.
dublinflea.ie

Dublin Flea Market runs on the last Sunday of every month and is without doubt the finest opportunity one will have to fill their house up with useless, unusual and discussion making tat. Live bands and DJs do their best to enthrall the large congregation but stern opposition is usually served up in the form of odd looking carved furniture and glorious local and organic food stalls. My finest buys include a brown leather belt and three Ramones DVDs at a combined total of €2.65.



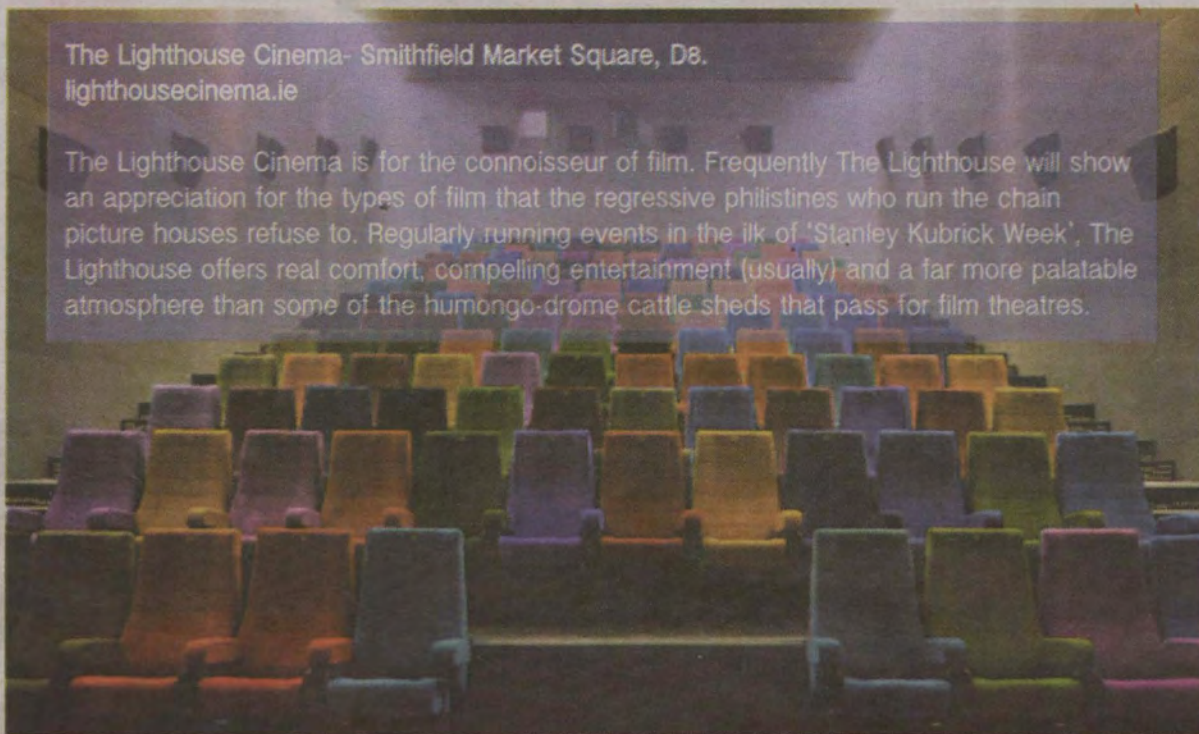
Ukiyo Bar and Karaoke rooms- Exchequer St., D2.
Ukiyobar.com

This isn't particularly 'alternative', but Ukiyo offers all the pleasure of murdering Billy Joel's 1973 hit 'Piano Man' with none of the unabashed feelings of shame one tends to incur the following morning. Clearly the Japanese don't believe in bothering fellow punters with out of tune, out of sync drivel warbles so they decided to stick the singers in a separate room. Another BYOB affair, Ukiyo offers a night of chuckles accompanied by an unusually healthy looking bank account.



The Lighthouse Cinema- Smithfield Market Square, D8.
lighthousecinema.ie

The Lighthouse Cinema is for the connoisseur of film. Frequently The Lighthouse will show an appreciation for the types of film that the regressive philistines who run the chain picture houses refuse to. Regularly running events in the ilk of 'Stanley Kubrick Week', The Lighthouse offers real comfort, compelling entertainment (usually) and a far more palatable atmosphere than some of the humongous cattle sheds that pass for film theatres.



Seomra Spraoi-10 Belvidere Court, D1.
seomraspraoi.org

"Seomra Spraoi is an autonomous social centre in Dublin's city centre. It is run by a non-hierarchical, anti capitalist collective on a not-for-profit basis" - pretentious as this may sound Seomra Spraoi is what Dublin sorely lacks. BYOB nights, Spanish classes, bicycle repair/trade and a vegan cafe are only a smattering of Seomra Spraoi's offerings. At this stage it may be Dublin's worst kept secret but if you fancy some political pontificating over a plate of watercress served with your own can of Dutch Gold this 'hub of positive-resistance' is a more than adequate candidate for your business.



Speaker's Square every Sunday from 4pm - Meeting House Square, Temple Bar.

Featuring some of the finest minds, utter mentalists and blatantly confused the country has to offer, Speaker's Square is the best ten minutes of free entertainment you're likely to find on a Sunday evening. Everything from the works of Katie Price to Hugo Chavez being the last great revolutionary is discussed here. I would say not for the easily offended or religious but you'd only be missing out.



Spin Roller disco- Longmile Road and Blanchardstown.
spinrollerdisco.ie

This is located more than a little outside town BUT the attraction of recreating Travolta's iconic Saturday Night Fever routine is all too much to bare. Nights usually start at 7.30, drink isn't the greatest idea for obvious reasons and groups are accommodated for some pre-night out calorie burning. Picture it now friends, you and a friend in loving embrace spinning blissfully to Boston's 'More Than a Feeling'.



The Little Room- Space 54 (beside Smithfield Luas stop).

The Little Room claims to be a record store, cafe and restaurant all in one. However, they also claim it's 'anything you want it to be'. Rather bold statements for a small, quaint space buried down a side-road off Smithfield. Although it's still in its infancy, the all encompassing wonder-venue is seeing its clientele grow week by week. This prosperity will undoubtedly continue given the apparent popularity of the all-night BYOB (bring your own bottle) parties. The Little Room hosts some of Dublin's best known DJs.

Born to scratch

Dublin based DJ Kormac O'Halloran speaks exclusively to DIT news about the launch of his new album, *Wordplay*

It's often said that men can't multitask but Irish DJ Kormac O'Halloran is testament to the polar opposite of this stereotyped oversight. It's a Wednesday evening and Kormac sits at home with one hand stretched over his DJ tools, the other wrapped around his mobile and his mouth ensconced in conversation. He conducts the interview while simultaneously fine tuning his latest swingtastic floor fillers admitting, "literally as we speak I'm finishing my album."

One look at Kormac's MySpace page reaffirms this man's immense energy and drive. Three E.P releases already sit proudly under his belt; *Scratch Marchin'*, *Good Lord and Showtime*. Brand spanking new tracks are also on the way under the preliminary title, *Wordplay*, set for release in March.

An impressive array of gigs swallows up his MySpace calendar for places I can't even pronounce in countries such as Switzerland, the Ukraine, Bulgaria and our very own emerald isle. His multifaceted endeavors even stretch to cake baking where the site claims to offer punters free cake and lemonade at the DJ's very own club nights in the Twisted Pepper venue.

DJ Kormac's career boasts humble beginnings at the tender age of sixteen. He recounts "I suppose the DJ side of things began in a small pirate radio station called radio Caroline which was in this guy's garden shed in a space which was about a meter squared. So I was doing that when I was in school... playing drum and bass records to probably about four people, I'd imagine, ya... that's how I got started."

His fan base is evidently as eclectic a mix as his tunes. His sound has been very well received at home and abroad. In a video aired by Bodytonic TV a German fan at one of Kormac's Austrian gigs claimed, "I travelled... a thousand kilometers only for good music."

The musician also has influential fans including the London based DJ Yoda. "Yoda has basically done a lot for me and got behind my releases from day one basically so I know him fairly well at this stage and he asked us to come over, he brought the whole big band over to play with him at the HMV Forum in London which was like two thousand people and a beautiful big old venue and we had a really nice slot and it was great."

Kormac's sound proves hard to describe even for the mind behind its creation. When asked what his new release would be like he simply says "you'd know it was

me if you know what I mean?" For those of you who don't know what he means, his work can be broadly bracketed as alternative. It hosts a diverse range of swing, jazz, hip-hop, electronic dance and even barber shop singing. The sound boasts a return to the 1920's big band style while also moving it forward by fusing it with new age electronic beats. His live performances with the big band feature live turntables, samplers, drums, double bass, a barbershop quartet, trumpet, clarinet, banjo and live visuals. No matter how high a heel you're wearing this cohesive formula speaks to your feet and adamantly tells them to move.

The DJ's new album grows from his previous jazz roots. "It also has more upbeat tracks that might have some reggae and dance hall influences, there's still the electronic element going on there as well. I suppose there is some jazz sampling going on as well but it wouldn't be as prevalent as the stuff that's gone before it."

Kormac describes his new album as consisting of "a couple of tracks that I've released already and then some new stuff. So for the first time I've started working with some guests outside the big band so I've a couple of MC's and a couple of DJ's coming on board for different tracks and obviously using some of the talents

By Aine Gilligan

from the big band and stuff as well." He was able to confirm that "Messiah J and the Expert are going to be on it, there's a rapper from Brighton and two very big DJ's from England and that's all I can say at the moment. There's going to be a couple of surprises and a couple of Irish people as well."

There's no kick back with a kit-kat or self-pat on the back once the album is released for this guy, however. DJ Kormac clearly likes to keep busy. "To go with the album there will be videos and there's a whole art work thing going on at the minute."

"To go with the album there will be videos and there's a whole art work thing going on at the minute."

Literally as soon as I get this done there's a bunch of stuff that we want to start incorporating into the performance, particularly video scratching, so that's next on the list as soon as the records are mixed and

in the bag."

Kormac offered some words of advice for budding DJ's saying, "I guess really find your own sound and stick to it and devote yourself to it and really just get behind it and push it as much as you can because no ones really going to do it for you, so that would be my words of wisdom, to use everything you can to further your career."

Exit through the Giftshop - a bargain ride to street art's backstage

By Celia Sanchez.

Enigmatic graffitist Banksy, celebrated worldwide for his subversive wit, brings his sardonic talent to the big screen.

Banksy's unpredictable documentary satire is maliciously engaging. Thierry Guetta, a quixotic French expat, successful vintage clothes dealer in LA turned compulsive videographer embarks on a journey through the world of 'street art'. His extravaganza and sheer dedication grant him privileged access to the scene's most camera-reticent artists - all assuming he's preparing an exclusive film on the counterculture movement. Guetta becomes a devoted accomplice, capturing unique insider footage of renowned artists as they bomb walls in the shadow. He eventually befriends the most clandestine of all, Banksy himself.

Thing is, the untiring enthusiast might not be a born filmmaker. And here is a twist that will give Banksy the prospect to swap parts. Starting with Guetta's embedded adrenaline shots of undercover artists, the documentary shifts when Banksy turns the camera on his fanatic stalker. Guetta soon becomes Mr. Brainwash: an unknown who reaches accidental triumph with his very own pop-street-kind-of-art exhibition.

What we end up with is the unbelievable story of a larger than life character who becomes a 'street art' sensation overnight, while his mentor looks on with a hybrid feeling of joy and guilt. But is the joke on us? Whether we might be stumbling into another Banksy hoax or not, *Exit Through The Gift Shop* is a one-of-a-kind documentary spoof on the rise of 'street art', its consequent commercialization and overwhelming hype.

Raising questions on the authenticity of art creation and its profitable exploitation, Banksy sets the record straight. What we finish with is a sharp and witty reflection on inventiveness, ambition and prejudiced notoriety.

Skillmasters breaks into its fourth year

The skillmasters tournament is the biggest breakdancing event Ireland has to offer and as it heads into its fourth year it has proved itself to be an international player.

The event, which is organised by the DIT Breakdancing Society, and almost single-handedly by their chairperson, Lukasz Luniewski, attracts some of the best bboys (that's, breakdance talk for dancers) from around the world.

In the past the skillmasters event has played host to some big hitters in the dance world, such as 'Prince Ken Swift' from the legendry Rock Steady Crew, popularly believed to have brought breakdancing back to our generation (and were even featured in *Flashdance* in their day!)

Last year their star attraction was bboy Zulu Gremlin who featured on the hit US show 'Dancing with the Stars' doing a dancing through the ages tribute.

This year their star judge is US heavy weight Poe One, from the Style Elements crew who have featured in ipod, coke, and car commercials. Along with appearing in hit films *2 Fast 2 Furious*, *All for Nothing*, *You Got Served* and *Step up 2*.

This year's event will be MC'd by hit UK DJ Trix who has Djed all over the world, working along side everyone from Sven Vath to Carl Cox.

Skillmasters kicks off on the 17th of April and tickets can be purchased at the societies office in DIT.



DIT BREAKDANCE SOCIETY PRESENTS: SKILL MASTERS 4TH EDITION BIGGEST IRISH BOY BATTLE

17.04.2010
Start: 1pm-9pm

DJ'S:
TIMBER
MESIA
+THE BOOMBA BROTHERS
MC:
TRIX (UK)
POPPING SHOWCASE BY:
LIPSKEE - NBDS/PL

JUDGES:
POE ONE-STYLE ELEMENTS/USA
BARTAZZ-KOW/PL
P-BTC/IRELAND

GREAT 10:
CYCU ROCK - Funky Mason, Ass Kickers/PL
YAMSKEEONE - Originally Hated/PL
ROYAL ONE - Rugged Solutions/NL
LADYBOI - Floor Riderz/UK
RZEMYK - Crazy Squad/PL
THOMAS - Rockafellaz/PL
ARMSTRONG - LLCB/PL
ISMAEL - Footzbeul/FR
ABD-I - Vagabond/FR
RAW-B - BTC/IRE



Tickets:
Pre sale: 10e Students & Kids, 20e Adults
On day of the event:
15 Students & Kids, 25 Adults

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Embracing our Irishness!

Andrew Purfield, AST

Last week, we celebrated our national holiday -- the day the whole world is Irish, or wants to be.

You could argue that Ireland has never been correctly governed. For the majority of our political history we were-and I stress were as we are thankfully no longer-suppressed by an institutionally corrupt church.

Irish people starved to death for the sake of their religion (as a symbol of nationality) in the 1840's and in even greater number's in the 1740's.

Our state was never very economically acute and it squandered vast financial resources which has

contributed to the current economic catastrophe. Less than twenty years ago students were often those with money rather than pure intellect.

No matter how intelligent you were, the points in Ireland's four universities were too high, places on courses you wanted were too few and only for the upper middle class and political establishment. However, despite all of this we have always had one great export-something that the World has to thank us for and that is literally ourselves.

The greatest gift we gave the world was ourselves. Yes, we have obsequious politicians who cannot say sorry, and whose idea of apologising often results in politically correct jargon i.e. Tanaiste Coughlan says(ironically every time an option to create jobs on her department's behalf surfaces) 'where we are' and 'Going forward'.

Recently she has said to one particular TD that accusing her of not doing her job is not calling into question her ability as Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment-rather it is 'remarkably sexist'.

Then we have the good Taoiseach who 'has regrets', 'takes his fair share of the blame' but cannot say sorry. It certainly appears that the only Minister who even has a case to argue for what they are doing right is Minister Lenihan-who is humble and honest to reporters-and even he faces the chop in 2012 for taking such a huge risk in putting the taxpayer's money into NAMA.

Yet, in the face of all of these politically irritable characters(who according to Gift Grub would fall into a barrel of jobs and come out clutching a P45!) we have ourselves-the Irish people who ultimately are the sole employers of all angry public servants, of many bankers, of the politicians, and who will share the bad times and the good times together-yet now we are once again beginning to leave together.

Because the reality is that we will be gifting the world with our talents, our passion, our charisma and our hospitality and no longer will we just be dreaming of foreign lands, as the rate of multi-

lingual Irish graduates is on the increase(I should know, I am one such future graduate, fingers crossed!).

For generations we were exported and the young people were heralded like cattle. The modern day perception by one too many immigrants in Ireland is that the Irish people are racist and stereotypically prejudiced. Well that is not the case.

Yes it is true that half a million people on the dole have little sympathy for any public servants striking-or foreign taxi driver's blocking up O'Connell street-and then we have Dunnes stores saying 'Better because we are Irish' when over half their staff cannot speak English very fluently.

However, does the jealousy of one Irish man in four on the live register-who is facing emigration-of a foreign man working in a job he would have done before necessarily mean he is racist? Something that is key to Global integration is the obstruction of this attitude that Irish people prejudice just because they have reason to.

If anything we are the kindest nation to other races globally. In what other country is it possible to come and study from anywhere so cheaply? In what other nation is it possible to run for an election after less than a decade of residency?

In what other nation is unemployment benefit so kind to those with barely two years of tax records? In what other nation is it so high? Certainly not in America, nor England, nor Germany, nor France nor any Asian state.

It is time that Ireland's globalised hospitality of the last twenty years or so was internationally recognised. People call America 'the land of opportunity'. Well, although we have a terrible health service, and have corruption in our financial, religious, and even political institutions, the people must not be condemned.

For if America is the land of opportunity-we are the people who provide that opportunity. Ireland has shaped the world culturally in many ways. Australia has seen a number of Anti-Irish assaults

and even killings in the last few years as more and more of us head there for work.

Like America and Canada, a hell of a lot of Australian people have Irish ancestry-as does New Zealand, even parts of Scandinavia such as Denmark has strong ties with Ireland. Britain is the elephant in the room here. France and Germany too have a significant proportion of Irish heritage-as does the Basque country as well as Andorra. Ireland, in light of St. Paddy's day, was rejoicing. Now we are back to our normal despondent routine.

However let us not forget it was the Irish who built the White House(and designed it!), it was the Irish who designed the great cross African railway line in the 1800's, it was the Irish who set the tact for what America claims is the 'free world' by being the only nation-over hundreds of years-ever to so vehemently defy tyranny.

Whilst other nations did not protest at being in a barbaric union that falsely preached civility just because of cultural differences and a greed for World domination, our little island broke up arguably the most powerful and one of the most obtuse empires the world ever knew.

Ireland in the twentieth century was a benchmark for peace and, though we have been politically corrupt, our democracy has never been dwindled-merely those who passed it's legislation and those who failed to enforce it.

So if we Irish are forced to emigrate, and we do not at first find the welcome we anticipate, remember this;never has a people of a nation so small had such a global influence historically. It has not been through our political policies, or our economic failures alone that we have done this-rather it has been by the Irish people-the country's number one export.

Everyone from John Lennon, JFK and Barack Obama has some claim to Irish heritage. Maybe it is time we were as proud of that heritage as other nations are as envious of it.



DIT Foundation is inviting staff, students and graduates to join us at this year's Flora Women's Mini-Marathon on the June Bank Holiday Weekend!

Run, walk or jog with us whilst raising funds to tackle educational disadvantage in Dublin through DIT Community Links.

Get fit, have some fun and raise much needed sponsorship for Community Links programmes including:

The Flora Women's Mini Marathon is the biggest all women's event of its kind in the world. To help you prepare, all DIT entrants will receive regular training trips and advice from the DIT Sports Office.

We have everything organised including t-shirts and sponsorship cards. For details on how to enter email Donal.omalley@dit.ie for details. Deadline Friday 12th April.

To see how DIT Foundation is supporting educational programmes in Dublin visit www.ditfoundation.ie

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Heartbreak as UCD dash CUFL dreams

Paul McNulty, AST

DIT 1
UCD 2

DIT were left heartbroken in their quest for CUFL glory after a last gasp winner from UCD in the CUFL final.

DIT manager Tony O' Connor started with O' Sullivan up front on his own, with Roche slotting into midfield, to stifle the much-heralded UCD midfield.

After a cagey opening, with both sides playing cat-and-mouse with each other, the game burst into life after 15 minutes.

UCD hit the post with a curling free-kick, after a dubious decision from the referee. Mc Mahon lined the ball up for UCD, and DIT goalkeeper Hyland was relieved to see the ball strike the upright.

DIT responded in kind when centre-back Niall Flynn rattled the crossbar with a volley from a corner.

Again the referee's decision-making could be called into question, with DIT denied a seemingly clear penalty when Roche was dragged down in the scramble leading to Flynn's volley.

The game continued in frenetic fashion for the next few minutes, and it was UCD who capitalised on the rip-roaring nature of the game.

In the 22nd minute UCD midfielder Mc Mahon latched onto a through ball and slotted calmly between Craig Hyland's legs in the DIT goal.

UCD tried to hammer home this advantage minutes later, but Hyland saved well from Heuston's powerful header.

DIT's break came after 30 minutes, when Roche, harried the UCD right-back into a mistake. The ball broke to Sean Fitzgerald on the edge of the box, who caught the ball on the half volley, and rifled it into the roof of the net.

The effervescent Roche was booked just before half-time for a rash tackle on the tormented UCD right-back O'Connor.

The second half began with UCD on the front foot. Two corners were dealt with by the DIT defence, but the UCD pressure was the dominant theme of the second half.

The conditions were not lending themselves to a flowing game, and the second half was a niggly, scrappy affair, with few clear cut chances for either side.

The tension of the affair was affecting the quality of the play, and the first attempt of the dismal second period came with just five minutes



Hyland, Zambra, Flynn, Mc Mahon, Mc Donald, Fitzgerald, O'Farrell, O' Connor, Kavanagh, O'Sullivan, Roche

remaining.

UCD strikers Mc Millan and Heuston combined well to release Heuston, but Craig Hyland bravely rescued the situation with a smothering save.

The game was trundling to a one-all draw, when a bouncing ball broke to UCD midfielder Robbie Cregan at the edge of the box.

It wasn't a truly clean strike, as the UCD man seemed to catch the ball on his shin, but regardless of whether by chance or by design, the ball looped agonisingly over Craig Hyland and into the DIT net.

This was the last action of the game, and to lose in such a fashion was a cruel blow for DIT, and for Hyland in particular, who had only conceded three goals in eight games in the run-up to the

final.

Conor Mc Mahon, the devastated DIT captain said afterwards, "The lads absolutely gutted that we didn't manage but that's the way football goes and we just didn't get the breaks on the night."

It was a disappointing end to DIT's historic journey to the final, and Mc Mahon was keen to emphasise the positives to be gleamed from the season, in this, his final year playing for DIT.

"It's been a pleasure to play with the lads this year and a privilege to captain what is arguably the best Soccer team the college has ever produced."

DIT- Hyland, Zambra, Flynn, Mc Mahon, Mc Donald, Fitzgerald, O'Farrell, O' Connor, Kavanagh, O'Sullivan, Roche.

Up the jumper...

Conor Ward, AST

"Parting is such sweet sorrow"...

The sentiments of Juliet as she bid young Romeo a good night. Fortunately for her at the time, Juliet was to see Romeo again.

That was before events took a turn for the worse in their racy love game, and for that fair maiden, for a little while at least, parting evoked a degree of pleasure as well as pain.

Not the case at Croke Park last Saturday I'm afraid. Heavy on the sorrow, not so much on the sweetness.

In fact, the only thing that felt sweet around Jones Road come full-time was the taste of the horrendously overpriced pints of Budweiser, for what was witnessed on the pitch had to be categorised as a tragedy.

They may have great memories of the time together, but this country's rugby team and Croke don't know when - or even if - they will ever be re-united, making this abrupt and uncomfortable goodbye all the more heart-wrenching.

Indeed, it became difficult to tell which one of Shakespeare's classics we were supposed to be watching.

We certainly started off full of enthusiasm in the hope our side would click just like the aforementioned starry-eyed lovers.

Instead, what unfolded was more The Comedy Of Errors. It soon became clear that the opposition had us Measure For Measure. As it transpired, all our excitement turned out to be Much Ado About Nothing.

And although it looked as if we might turn things around and sneak the result, it certainly was not a case of All's Well That Ends Well.

And the misery was only compounded by the sight of a rather well-built middle-aged kilted gent exiting the ground puffing gleefully on a Hamlet, no doubt en route to any number of this town's fine alehouses.

On reflection, perhaps it's wisest to simply refer to the events of last Saturday as "the Scottish play" for fear of cursing any future performances.

After the dust has settled, it's clear that Ireland lost this game for a few simple reasons.

"We didn't have our greatest day, we made errors around the place," admitted a sombre Declan Kidney post match.

The lineout, so often a cornerstone for victory, became a complete disaster area, as predictably enough did the scrum, making any forward momentum impossible at times.

The error count, by this team's usual very high standards, was off the charts. Too many players were below their best - Rory Best, Jamie Heaslip, Stephen Ferris, Tomas O'Leary and Gordon D'Arcy spring immediately to mind.

Though he shouldn't shoulder the bulk of the blame, Jonny Sexton missed a couple of crucial penalties, and he failed to dictate the pattern and tempo of the game.

Ronan O'Gara came on to steady the ship, but that was too little too late.

And then you look at the tactics. Looking to play overly flamboyant rugby and throwing around Hollywood-esque passes early in the game was not the way to go against a team like Scotland, even if it did produce a fine try for Brian O'Driscoll.

Ireland eventually did a little of what this column title suggests and stuck it up the jumper, to good effect too, but by that stage they were no longer the masters of their destiny.

It's only right to give Scotland their due also. Though not overburdened by the ravages of talent, they were fiercely determined, organised, physically robust, tactically astute and admirably resilient.

They set about disrupting Ireland's set piece and making life difficult at the breakdown, and succeeded.

Dan Parks - not always the most reliable kicker in the game - showed nerves of steel to slot the winning score.

And after a string of tough losses which reflected harshly on Scotland's credentials as a side, they emerged with a victory to savour on the final day to avoid wooden spoon embarrassment.

So after the highs of last year's historic Grand Slam, here is a dose of hard cold reality. No silverware, no fifth Triple Crown in the space of seven seasons, proving that such achievements

ought to be savoured when they come along.

Something of the natural order has been restored, with a talented French side reigning supreme again as Grand Slam champs. Oh, those French!

So where does this leave us? Plenty of food for thought as our lads head below the equator in the summer and then back to Dublin 4.

Three wins in the championship is not what we had hoped for, but it's by no means a disaster. The victories over Wales and especially England were encouraging.

But on fine margins hang victory and defeat. A few home truths have to be faced. This team needs to shore up their set piece and keep improving their handling skills.

John Hayes, one of the greatest servants Irish rugby has ever had, surely cannot carry on in the starting side. We need to beat teams in the physical stakes first and foremost before attempting too much champagne rugby.

And what of the greatest barroom debate of the lot, the out-half dilemma? Our last outing at Croke provided more questions than answers.

While Kidney appeared to have settled on the flair of Sexton as his preferred option, he found himself having to revert to the tried and trusted skills set of O'Gara at the most crucial juncture.

And perhaps that might serve us best for a little while more, though it's clear that both players have a key role to play going forward.

As the debate continues to rage, it's back to provincial concerns and the Heineken Cup.

Some ups and downs, but overall Ireland's time at GAA headquarters was on the positive side, and the generosity of the hosts should not soon be forgotten.



Cheltenham round-up and Grand National preview

Jim Sheridan, AST

As the Cheltenham festival fades to memory for another year there was absolutely no doubt who were the biggest winners over the four days.

With no fewer than 22 of the 26 favourites getting turned over and three of the big four bankers; Dunguib, Master Minded and Kauto Star coming unstuck, it was the bookmakers who went home smiling.

So with the layers taking the spoils off the track who had a good or bad festival on it...

It was a good week for...

A.P.McCOY: There is simply no jockey like him. An hour after taking a horrible fall off Jered in the opening race on the Thursday, McCoy, sporting a plaster on his face from where Jered kicked him and limping badly, was back in the winners enclosure after giving Albertas Run a powerful ride to see off Ruby Walsh and Poquelin in the Ryanair Chase.

Two races later and McCoy was being helped into the ambulance again after another shocking fall that would have put most other jockeys on the easy list. Not McCoy. He was back the next day to give Denman a power packed ride in defeat in the Gold Cup. Two winners including a Champion Hurdle was the best way to answer any critics out there.

KATIE WALSH: Ruby's younger sister had the week of her life riding two winners. For many her battle up the hill with fellow Irish amateur Nina Carberry in the National Hunt chase was the highlight of the festival.

Her second win was all the more remarkable as it came against the professionals in one of the most competitive races of the year, the County Hurdle.

Willie Mullins said that she thinks like a professional and on this evidence she rides like one too. Willie Mullins also gave the quote of the week. "Two consecutive winners, Ruby last night and Katie today. Ted Walsh is the leading stud at Cheltenham."

NIGEL TWISTON DAVIES: While the build up to the Gold Cup was dominated by Kauto Star and Denman, Nigel Twiston Davies was quietly plotting their downfall away from the limelight with his own stable star Imperial Commander.

Despite flopping at Kempton over Christmas Twiston Davies never lost faith in the horse. He freshened him up and produced him in peak condition to topple the big two in a high quality Gold Cup.

For good measure he won two of the next three races on a memorable Gold Cup day and trained Khyber Khim to be runner up in the Champion Hurdle.

BINOCULAR: After a season of disappointing runs and an injury that his trainer Nicky Henderson thought would rule him out of Cheltenham, Binocular finally lived up to the hype and produced a sensational performance to win the Champion Hurdle.

Favourite for the race early in the season he never seemed to find form all year until a scintillating school over 5 hurdles two weeks before the race convinced connections he was in fact ready to run. An inspired move.

It was a bad week for...

PAUL NICHOLLS: Despite coming away with two winners it was disappointing festival for the champion trainer.



Big Bucks winning a second consecutive world hurdle would have given him some satisfaction but seeing Master Minded and Kauto Star relinquishing their crowns would have been a big blow for him.

His other banker for the week Poquelin also got turned over in the Ryanair chase to top off a difficult few days for Nicholls.

GO NATIVE: Noel Meade's charge went off a heavily backed 3-1 favourite for the champion hurdle but could only beat two horses home in tenth place.

It was all the more disappointing for his owners, trainer, jockey and groom who would have shared a one million pound bonus if he managed to win the race.

They will all live to fight another day but an opportunity like that is a once in a lifetime in jump racing.

BRIAN O'CONNELL: Riding the most talked about horse in the build-up to the festival would be a pressure job for any jockey.

For a jockey in his first year as a professional it has to be even more difficult. O'Connell's ride aboard the 4-5 favourite was criticised by some who felt he would have won if ridden by a more experienced jockey, most notably live on Channel 4 by John McCrirrick.

It would have been a tough few days for O'Connell but he can only gain from the experience and will definitely be back.

LONG RUN: Nicky Henderson's French

bred gelding came into the RSA Chase with a massive reputation based on his performances in France and a grade one win at Kempton over Christmas.

His trainer said he was hopeful he would produce something special at the festival but instead he struggled up the hill to finish a well beaten third to Weapons Amnesty.

Grand National

Now that Cheltenham is out of the way thoughts begin to turn to Aintree and the Grand National.

As usual it is just about the most open race of the year with the Paul Nicholls trained Big Fella Thanks at the head of the betting at 8-1 with Paddy Power. His stable companion Tricky Trickster is next in the betting with last year's winner Mon Mome

My selection for the race is the Gordon Elliot trained Backstage who has been campaigned this season with this race specifically in mind.

He will hopefully get the good ground he likes and will relish the marathon trip having won over three miles two furlongs earlier this year.

From a stable that knows how to win a grand national and running off a nice weight of eleven stone he could be the one to bring the prize back to Ireland for the first time since 2007.

BACKSTAGE - €25 Each Way, Aintree Grand National

16-1 with Paddy Power

DIT hopes dead after quarter final failure

Paul McNulty, AST

Waterford IT 0-14
Dublin IT 0-12

DIT's hopes of Fitzgibbon glory were dashed at the quarter-final stage after an absorbing quarter-final at Ballygunner in Waterford.

It was a tight and absorbing match and DIT put it up to the eight time champions Waterford IT before eventually being narrowly edged out.

DIT's weakness all year had been their poor starts, and this same failing came back to haunt them in this game.

WIT raced to an early four-point lead courtesy of two frees from Timmy Hammersley and two fine points from play by Cork's Fintan O'Leary.

DIT then stormed into life, and rattled off five points in succession to go into the lead for the first time. Dublin's Peter Kelly scored two of these with two more coming from Kilkenny All-Ireland winner Willie O'Dwyer.

The streaky nature of the game continued with WIT firing over four unanswered points, three of which came from Hammersley, to go in at half-time three points up.

DIT started the second half with another point from the excellent Kelly. They were then given a tremendous opportunity to take the lead when referee Michael Wadding awarded them a penalty.

Paul Ryan, who had been in superb form all season, stepped up to take the penalty but his strike went over rather than under as WIT were let off the hook.

DIT levelled with a sublime Harry Kehoe point and then opened up a two-point lead thanks to two points in quick succession from wing-back Paul Lynch and full-forward Declan O'Dwyer.

As the game edged towards the final quarter Hammersley and DIT's David Treacy traded points. WIT's Wexford midfielder Mark Molloy began to exert a major influence on the game as it entered the final minutes.

A free apiece from Hammersley and Ray McLoughney brought WIT back level before man-of-the-match Molloy put the home side ahead with a great point from distance.

Kieran Grehan then scored his first point of the game to open up a two-point lead for the Waterford side. A free from Willie O'Dwyer briefly raised DIT hopes of forcing extra-time but the game was wrapped up in injury-time when substitute Richie McCarthy fired over for WIT.

WIT -- A Power; B Kenny, S Fives, N Connors; W Hutchinson, E Barrett, PJ Rowe; M Molloy(0-1), W O'Dwyer; F O'Leary(0-2), K Reade(0-1), R Goode; T Hammersley (0-7, 0-5f), K Grehan(0-1), R McLoughney(0-1).

Subs: R McCarthy(0-1) for Goode

DIT -- T McGarry; P Phelan, J Walsh, C O'Shaughnessy; F Cullen, T Brady, P Lynch(0-1), J Clarke, P Hartley; P Kelly(0-3), W O'Dwyer(0-3), D Treacy(0-1), P Ryan(0-2), D O'Dwyer(0-1), H Kehoe(0-1). Subs: D Molloy for Clarke, P Morris for Kelly

Tune in to our new

DIT News Blog at

ditnewsblog@wordpress.com

This week, on podcast, we have Mary Harney on being a woman in politics,

top poker tips from the winner of the DIT vs DCU tournament,

Ciarán Nevin (uncut),

DIT Fashion Show preparations,

your favourite books

and more....

The day and the life of professional gambler – a chat with Rory Rees Brennan – Poker Champion of Ireland 2009.

Genevieve Brennan, AST

In a recession a 'professional poker player' is a career that dreams are made of, or nightmares depending on how lucky or how good you actually are.

Rory Rees Brennan is a twenty four year old college graduate with a degree in Commerce and Masters in Business. Anyone would presume a young man of his education would start up in a bank or an accounting firm and so did he.

However these kinds of jobs have become increasingly difficult to get and much less lucrative since the economic bubble burst. In the last few years, he's landed a sponsorship with Boyle Sports, won entries into the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas and won the title of The Irish Poker Champion 2009 with prize money of €160,000.

Not bad for a 24 year old who otherwise would be making close to minimum wage if he was even lucky enough to get job. He also travels to places like The Bahamas and Morocco to play in poker tournaments. To see what a day in the life of a professional gambler is like, I attended the 'Celebrity Poker Final' where Rees Brennan had won a seat.

Arrive down to City West Hotel passing two shiny range rovers with "ALL IN" printed on their number plates. A white hummer pulls up and the players began to filter out name by name, some were professional players and others were 'celebrity' amateurs.

Once they were finished shooting I followed Rees Brennan to the bar where he led me to a table of young, loud guys. He sat down pulling out a chair for me.

"It doesn't start for a while so we're going to have a few drinks" he says. Not all the men at the table were playing tonight but had come to watch or were staying the night waiting for the "Winterfest Tournament" which took place the next day. The first thing I noticed in the bar was the complete mix of people there, they were mostly men but that's where the similarities ended.

The table I was at was easily recognizable as the group of confident, ambitious, young guys in their twenties from Dublin. Other than that some men wandered around in large groups laughing loudly, speaking in thick country accents.

Some others resembled old homeless men and were shabbily dressed, usually sitting alone. "Do you see that guy there?" one of the players at the table asked me, I turned around and saw a balding man sipping a pint reading the newspaper "he just got out of jail." I asked for what, but he just shrugged and I guessed from the tone of his voice, it was not for petty crime.

Once it was time for Rees Brennan to go to the set to start playing, I got up to follow but the others stopped me saying "It won't get started for ages you can come up with us soon."

Something which really stuck me was the sense of community and camaraderie between all the players. People constantly stopped at the table and greeted each person by name, having a chat and friendly banter.

In a later interview with Rees Brennan he said, "Yeah when we go to Vegas there is a group of about thirty Irish who are friendly and hang around, with the Americans and Scandinavians etc, they don't do that I guess it's just the Irish way."

Eventually the others go to the set. I began to think that the real event at these tournaments was in the bar. The set is small and it's boiling hot, you can see the players sweating and shifting in their seats.

A few have already been knocked out but Rees Brennan still remains. A guy in his mid thirties comes and sits beside one of the guys from the bar and asks "How much is Rees playing for?" "€12,000" he answers and they both snort with laughter.

"I suppose it's not about the money, this kinda thing." The older man guffaws. When he leaves, the guy from the bar turns to me and says "That guy I was just talking to, he is a professional too, he's the big time though. This is nothing for him. He gets paid for every step he takes."

I began to think that I'm the only person in this room who thinks that €12,000 euro for sitting in a studio for a few hours is huge money.

I start to wonder whether these young guys in their twenties have peaked too soon. They are clearly making good money and enjoying themselves, but



this kind inconsistent life style can only go on for so long.

I asked Rees Brennan about this later and he answered "I definitely see myself getting burnt out in ten years time, I'll play less and hopefully have a small business on the side."

This doesn't sound bad at all, make thousands in your twenties, then basically retire and work on the side in a business venture.

While this plan is not beyond the realms of possibility for Rees Brennan who is obviously a smart guy. I can't help but think about how risky this game is and with a bad streak, he could end up with nothing. I ask him if this worries him. "I'm doing much better than I would be in any other job so it's not really a hard decision for me. Everyone worries about their jobs and the future."

As I watch him play, he does seem cool and collected having the odd laugh with the player beside him.

He comes close to getting wiped out a few times but doesn't give away anything except a slightly nervous smile.

He and his friends are young, well educated and good looking guys. I can see why they are suited for sponsors who want they're players to project a positive image and keep people interested.

Rees Brennan is knocked out and comes third in the tournament. He goes home with €8,000. He seems pleased, but not ecstatic. His friends playfully make fun of him for not going all the way.

The group trawls back to the bar. I congratulate Rees Brennan who shrugs almost embarrassed he thanks me for coming and then leaves. It is fascinating to think that a circle of friends, who seem close, obviously become each other's competition eventually.

The last question I ask Rees Brennan is does he still enjoy the game? I guessed he didn't. It's quite a different thing to playing cards with friends over pints, to the prospect of losing thousands. "You can't not enjoy playing when you're winning" he said with a coy smile.

The person who wins the tournament turns out to be an amateur, a professional boxer. I suppose there's no denying that luck does play a large part in this game and if you don't have it, skill is not much good. As for Rees Brennan he says he's just like the rest of us.

st of us living his life and seeing how it goes. As far as I can see for now, it's going pretty good.

Joy as camogie girls trump Tralee to claim Purcell Cup

DIT 1-05
IT Tralee 0-05

Paul McNulty, ST

DIT's camogie team, following a 1-5 point win over Tralee IT, lifted the Purcell Cup for the first time in their history with a victory in Cork.

This, the first ever All-Ireland championship title for DIT Camogie, represents a significant breakthrough for the camogie in DIT.

After losing the 2008 final in heartbreaking fashion to Queens University by a point, DIT were determined not to let this happen again.

In their semi-final, DIT pipped Limerick's Mary

Immaculate by a point. Joanne Hoary, the DIT captain, hit a hat-trick of goals as DIT came from behind to win it in injury time.

DIT roared into the final with a goal from Noelle Corrigan inside 30 seconds. Tralee soon countered with three frees from Orla Murphy to tie the game and the teams went in level at half time, 1-1 to 0-4.

DIT improved and upped the tempo in the second half, and Tralee found it hard to cope. They were limited to one Danielle Sheedy score for the entire second half.

While DIT's Jane Dolan, later named player of the tournament, dictated the play from midfield. Dublin's Jolene Hoary caused the Tralee defence trouble while nice points from Aisling Brogan and student Cathy Bowes sealed a historic victory for the college.



An elated team celebrate their victory with champagne and a trophy

DIT also picked up four College All Stars following the tournament -Karen Mullins (DIT) corner back, Sarah Ryan (DIT) wing back, Aileen O'Loughlin (DIT) Midfield; Jane Dolan (DIT) Midfield

Stephen Hoary, manager of the team said, "I couldn't have asked for any more from the squad, and it means the world to us".

This seminal win is further evidence of the development of both codes of hurling in DIT in

recent years.

"It's a huge boost to us. This victory has put camogie on the map. Five years ago we had no camogie. Now we are the Purcell Cup winners. Stephen did a fabulous job as manager, and the girls were just superb," DIT's GAA Development Officer Darragh Biddlecombe said afterwards.

DIT are now on the scent of the double. They'll play the Division 2 League final in April.